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GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2021

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Wellmore Coal Company Wins Grand Champion at Virginia Mining Institute Mine Rescue Competition

Blacksburg, Va. – The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy's (DMME) was on hand at the Virginia Mining Institute (VMI) Mine Rescue Competition in Blacksburg, Virginia this week. The competition was held at the Blacksburg Parks and Recreation Community Center and included the best in coal mining safety showing off their life-saving skills.

"This was an exciting reunion for our mine rescue teams after COVID canceled the 2020 competition," said DMME Director of Coal Programs Randy Moore. "These lifesaving skills are one of a kind among these truly unique rescuers. The practice they get here is invaluable training toward a real-life scenario we hope never happens."

The Virginia Mining Institute (VMI) sponsored the contest. DMME and their Mine Rescue team along with several volunteers helped at the event, which included rescue and recovery team competitions, pre-shift, bench and first aid skills competition.

The teams competed in rescue and recovery procedures in a staged mine disaster scenario. Teams were judged on their thoroughness and their ability to identify and respond to hazards. Miners also competed in a First Aid skills competition and a bench contest in which they identify problems within breathing apparatuses.

The pre-shift competition is designed for certified mine foremen and requires the individuals to identify any safety issues harmful to other miners and to correct them. Foremen at active mines are required to do this before and during each shift.

The 2021 VMI Mine Rescue Competition was dedicated to John Earl "Hoppy" Brown.

Grand Champion of Mine Rescue: Wellmore Coal Company

1st Runner-Up of Mine Rescue: Coronado Buchanan – Buchanan Red

2nd Runner-Up of Mine Rescue: Buchanan Minerals – Buchanan Black

1st Place Mine Rescue Team Day 1: Wellmore Coal Company

2nd Place Team Day 1: Coronado Buchanan – Buchanan Red

3rd Place Team Day 1: State of Alabama – Blue Team

1st Place Mine Rescue Team Day 2: Wellmore Coal Company

2nd Place Mine Rescue Team Day 2: Buchanan Minerals – Buchanan Black

3rd Place Mine Rescue Team Day 2: Prairie State Generating Company

First Aid 1st Place: State of Alabama – Green Team

Bench 1st Place: State of Alabama – Blue Team – Steve Cannon

Bench 2nd Place: Paramount Contura – Robert Middleton

Bench 1st Place: 240R- Arch Resources, Inc. – Leer Mine Team – Chris Kyle

Bench 2nd Place: 240R- Wellmore Coal Company – Wellmore – Shannon Moore

Pre-Shift 1st Place: Wellmore Coal Company – Wellmore – Caleb Schoeff

Pre-Shift 2nd Place: Paramount Contura – Paramount Contura – Brian Keith

Pre-Shift 3rd Place: Coronado Coal – Central Appalachia – Andrew Mullins

Mine Rescue Teams: Wellmore Coal Company, Grundy, Virginia

Coronado Buchanan Mine – Buchanan Red, Oakwood, Virginia

Buchanan Minerals – Buchanan Black, Oakwood, Virginia

State of Alabama – Blue Team, Sumiton, Alabama

State of Alabama – Green Team, Sumiton, Alabama

Paramount Contura – Paramount Contura, Norton Virginia

Arch Resources Inc – Leer Mine Team, Grafton, West Virginia

Foresight Energy South – Green Team, Macedenia, Illinois

Pocahontas Coal Company – Pocahontas Mine Rescue, Beckley, West Virginia

Prairie State Generating – Grove Mine Rescue, Marissa, Illinois

Coronado Coal - Central Appalachia, Man, West Virginia

Arch Resources/Beckley – Eccles, West Virginia

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